

# Outreach & Education for the Sun Valley Watershed Retrofit Project

The Trans-agency Resources for Environmental and Economic Sustainability (T.R.E.E.S.) Project, a Department of TreePeople



*Home Forester workshop teaches Sun Valley residents hands-on landscaping techniques that will conserve water and reduce stormwater runoff.*

## Award Amount

\$350,000

## Watershed

Sun Valley Watershed

## County

Los Angeles County

## CALFED Region

Southern California Region

## Legislative Districts

US Congress: 26

State Assembly: 36

State Senate: 17

## Purpose

Expand education and outreach to encourage the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to control and capture stormwater runoff and reduce demand for water.

## Project Goals

- Demonstrate, at the watershed level, the economic, environmental, and social benefits of BMPs and cooperative watershed management to sustain communities in this urban watershed.
- Use outreach and education to increase environmental literacy in community households.
- Organize and support a neighborhood steward network to create an environmentally sustainable vision.
- Support families as they evaluate their properties, prescribe changes, and implement BMPs.

## Benefits to the CALFED Program

*The Sun Valley Watershed is part of the CALFED Program's solution area and receives the majority of its water supply from imported sources. This project promotes BMPs to control and capture stormwater runoff and promote water conservation through a public outreach and education program. Retaining stormwater runoff can significantly augment the local water supply, thereby reducing the demand for imported Bay-Delta water. The education component fosters awareness of the ever-increasing demand on California's water supply and expands public awareness in Southern California of the area's dependence on imported water from the Bay-Delta. The project is intended as a pilot for the retrofit of the entire Los Angeles basin, which will eventually reduce demand on a much larger scale.*

## Project Overview

The Sun Valley project area is a 2,700-acre, 8,000-household urban watershed composed of multi-ethnic communities located in Los Angeles County's northeast San Fernando Valley. The area is a flat and near-treeless community located within the City of Los Angeles, prone to flashfloods because of the lack of storm drains. Unfortunately, the Los Angeles River Watershed is not engineered to capture this briefly abundant resource for local use. Instead, rain falls mostly on impervious surfaces, creating serious flood control challenges and eventually carrying a heavy pollutant load into stormdrains and the ocean. At the urging of T.R.E.E.S., Los Angeles County decided to favor an area-wide retrofit in accordance with best management practices (BMPs) that includes promoting ecological principles and water conservation rather than constructing stormdrains throughout Sun Valley.

This new vision allows regional stakeholders to pool their resources and retrofit the watershed with retention basins, cisterns, strategic tree planting, permeable pavement, groundwater infiltrators and other BMPs. These will help:

- eliminate flooding,
- promote conservation,
- reduce demand for water imports from the Bay-Delta,
- capture water,
- green the community,
- increase recreational opportunities,
- create jobs, and
- improve the quality of life for residents.

This project expands existing public outreach and education to promote the broad-scale adoption of water conservation BMPs in the Sun Valley Watershed. This project includes school education programs, community outreach, information sharing.



*Zev Yaroslavsky, Maria Chong-Castillo, and Terri Grant at a recent Sun Valley Watershed Stakeholders Group Town Hall meeting.*

## Contact Information

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